(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that a series of planned attacks on the workers engaged in various developmental projects being executed by the Indian Government in Afghanistan were reported in the recent past; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) On 7th July 2008, at 0831 local time, a vehicle borne improvised explosive device was exploded by a suicide bomber near the entrance gate of the Indian Embassy in Kabul. The attack resulted in the tragic deaths of Shri V.V. Rao, Counsellor, Brig. R.D. Mehta, Defence Attache in the Embassy and their Afghan driver Mr. Neamatullah who were in an Embassy vehicle. Constable Ajay Singh Pathania (ITBP), Constable Roop Singh (ITBP) and 55 Afghan nationals (including 11 security personnel and 17 schoolchildren) were also killed. More than 150 persons received injuries. A large number of vehicles, both inside and outside the Chancery premises, were badly damaged. The Chancery building was also badly damaged. The attack on our Embassy was a dastardly terrorist attack perpetuated by the enemies of peace in Afghanistan and our region.

(c) and (d) Yes. The Government of India are executing various developmental and humanitarian projects in Afghanistan which have been targeted by militants on many occasions. The security of our Embassy and four Consulates and their personnel has been augmented. The Afghan Government have been fully sensitised on providing adequate protection to Indian project workers and personnel in different parts of Afghanistan.

Establishment of rail lines by China

687. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that China announced its plans to establish six more rail lines to Qinghai-Tibet plateau in the Himalayas which are expected to be put into operation before 2020;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Government have seen reports in the Chinese media stating that China is planning to add six more rail lines to the Qinghai-Tibet railway by 2020. According to these reports, the planned lines are: (i) Lhasa to Nyingchi; (ii) Lhasa to Shigatse; (iii) Golmud (Qinghai province) to Chengdu (Sichuan province); (iv) Golmud to Dunhuang (Gansu province); (v) Golmud to Kuerle (Xinjiang XUAR); and (vi) Xining (Qinghai province) to Zhangye (Gansu province). These media reports also indicate that the extension of the railway line is aimed at contributing to the development of the western region of China.

Government keep a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on India's security and take all necessary measures to safeguard it.